

Message Text

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TO AMEMBASSY ATHENS IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY

USMISSION NATO PRIORITY

SECDEF PRIORITY

USNMR SHAPE PRIORITY

USDELMC PRIORITY

USCINCEUR PRIORITY

CINCUSAFE PRIORITY

CINCUSNAVEUR PRIORITY

CINCUSAREUR PRIORITY

DIRNSA PRIORITY

USDOCOSOUTH PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 117166

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MASS, GR, US

SUBJECT: US-GREEK DEFENSE COOPERATION DISCUSSIONS

REF: ATHENS 4692

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1. WE AGREE THAT A PAUSE IN THE DEFENSE COOPERATION DISCUSSIONS IS IN ORDER AND THAT WASHINGTON TEAM MEMBERS CAN DEPART ATHENS WHEN APPROPRIATE. WE WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE OUR COMMENDATION FOR THE WORK OF ALL INVOLVED IN WHAT WE RECOGNIZE HAS BEEN A GRUELING EFFORT. THE EXCELLENT RESULTS REFLECT THE SKILL AND PERSISTENCE OF THE SMALL GROUP WHICH FUNCTIONED SO EFFECTIVELY UNDER THE DIRECTION

OF AMBASSADOR KUBISCH.

2. WE BELIEVE THAT THE PROPOSED JUNE 20 DATE FOR RESUMPTION OF THE TALKS IS REASONABLE UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THIS SHOULD AFFORD US THE NECESSARY TIME TO RESOLVE THE ESSENTIALLY FINANCIAL ISSUES CONCERNING PARITY IN PROCUREMENT, NEA MAKRI/DCS AND THE AIRBORNE RECONNAISSANCE PACKAGE.

3. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH HOLDING THE NEXT ROUND IN ATHENS, WE CANNOT SEE HOW THE NEXT, AND PROBABLY CONCLUDING ROUND, CAN BE CONDUCTED IN THE SAME LOW-KEY,

CONFIDENTIAL MANNER AS THE PREVIOUS ROUND. THE RESOLUTION OF THE FINANCIAL ISSUES WILL REQUIRE DIFFERENT WASHINGTON REPRESENTATION AND, PRESUMING AN AGREEMENT AT THE END OF THE ROUND WILL BE INITIALED, WE WOULD WANT TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO HIGHER-LEVEL WASHINGTON REPRESENTATION. THUS, WE SEE NO ALTERNATIVE TO CONDUCTING THE FINAL PHASE ON A FORMAL, PUBLICALLY ACKNOWLEDGED BASIS.

4. WE RECOGNIZE THAT THESE FINANCIAL ISSUES ARE PRIMARILY MATTERS TO BE RESOLVED ON THE U.S. SIDE. WE WANT TO GO AS FAR AS WE CAN TO ACCOMMODATE CARAMANLIS' CONCERNS, HOWEVER, AND IF THE GREEKS DESIRE IT WE WOULD NOT OBJECT TO UNPUBLISHED PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS EITHER HERE OR IN ATHENS SHORTLY BEFORE JUNE 20. THIS COULD BE ACCOMPLISHED, FOR EXAMPLE, BY A VISIT TO WASHINGTON BY CHRYSOPATHIS OR TZOUNIS, OR, ALTERNATIVELY, IN ATHENS BY THE AMBASSADOR
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AND PERHAPS ONE OR TWO DEPARTMENT SPECIALISTS. IF SUCH PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS RESULTED IN FAVORABLE PROSPECTS FOR THE CONCLUSION OF THE NEGOTIATIONS, WE WOULD THEN GO FORWARD WITH THE JUNE 20 ROUND ATTENDED BY SOME FORM OF PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.

5. EMBASSY SHOULD DISCUSS THIS APPROACH INFORMALLY WITH THE GREEKS AND POINT OUT THE OBVIOUS PROBLEMS CONNECTED WITH ATTEMPTING TO CONCLUDE THE TALKS THROUGH LOW-KEY, CONFIDENTIAL DISCUSSIONS. YOU ARE AUTHORIZED TO DETERMINE IF THE GREEKS DESIRE SOME FORM OF LOW-PROFILE PREPARATORY DISCUSSIONS JUST PRIOR TO JUNE 20, BUT OUR AGREEMENT TO PROCEED IN THIS MANNER SHOULD BE COUPLED WITH GREEK ACCEPTANCE THAT THE CONCLUDING ROUND OF THE TALKS WILL BE ON FORMAL BASIS. CHRISTOPHER

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